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SPIDERMAN



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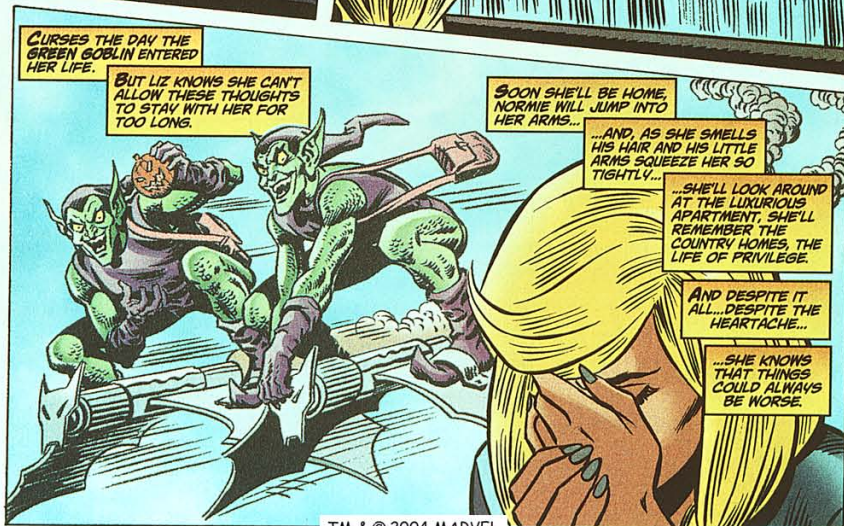
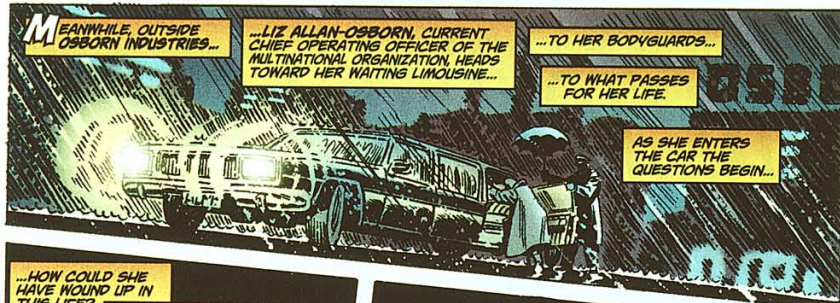




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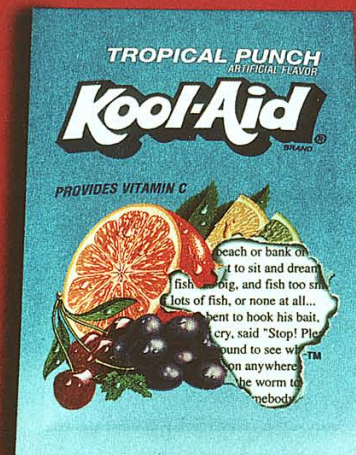
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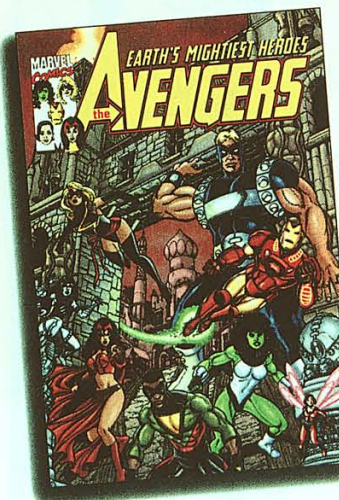


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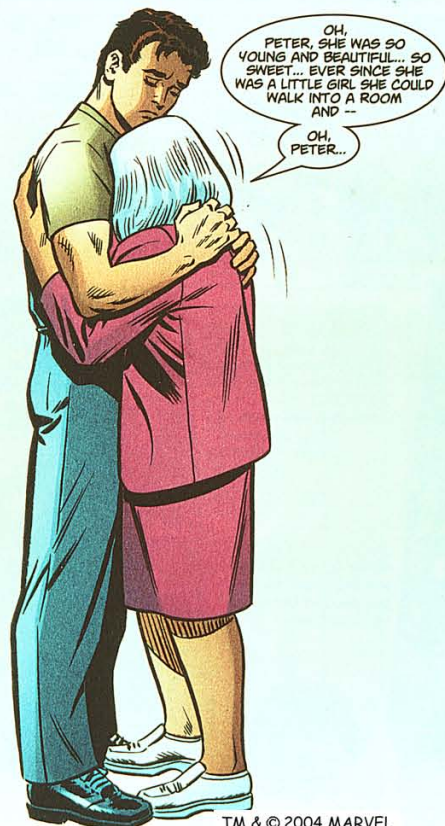
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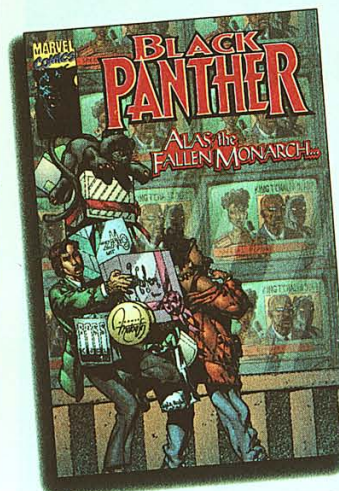
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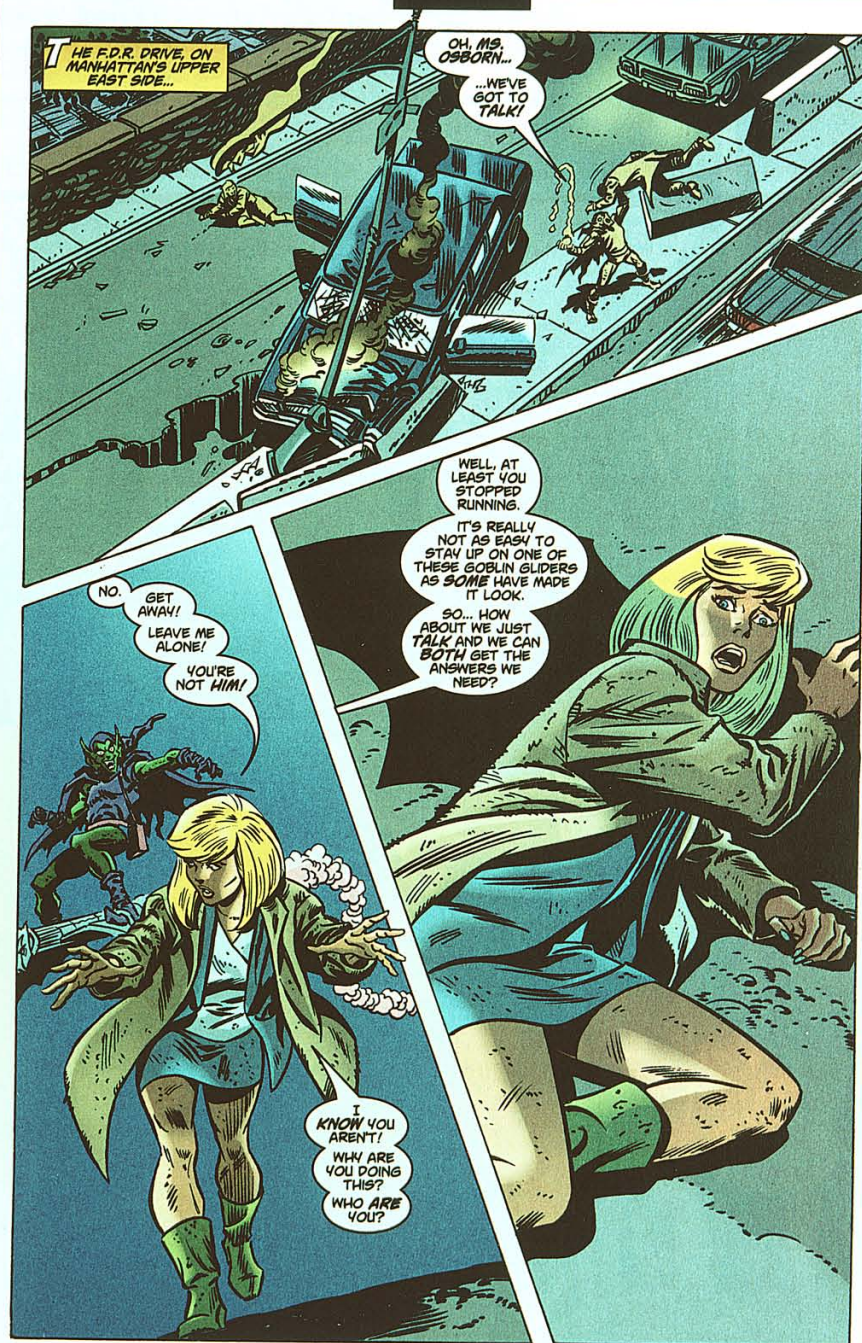
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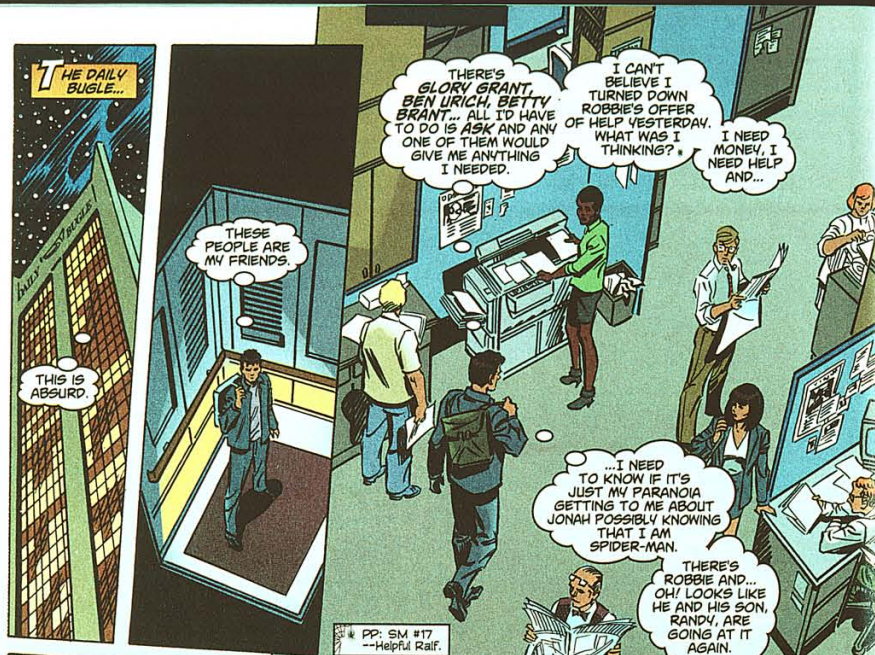


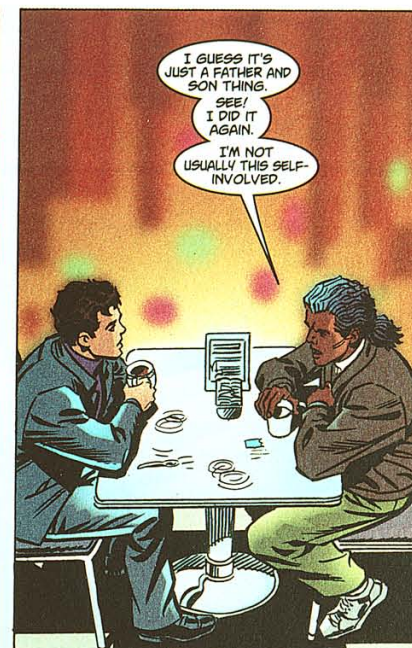
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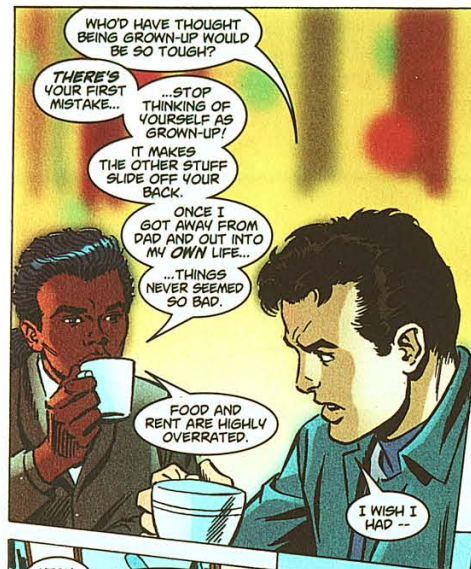
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THERE'S YOUR FIRST MISTAKE...

...STOP THINKING OF YOURSELF AS GROWN-UP! IT MAKES THE OTHER STUFF SLIDE OFF YOUR BACK.

ONCE I GOT AWAY FROM DAD AND OUT INTO MY OWN LIFE...

...THINGS NEVER SEEMED SO BAD.

FOOD AND RENT ARE HIGHLY OVERATED.

I WISH I HAD --



PETER! SOMEONE THOUGHT HE SAW YOU COMING IN HERE. YOU DO STILL HAVE A CAMERA?



YEAH, BETTY.

THEN WE'VE GOT AN ASSIGNMENT. I COULDN'T DO IT MYSELF, BUT I THOUGHT...

ANYWAY, THE GREEN GOBLIN APPEARS TO BE BACK IN TOWN... HE'S AFTER LIZ OSBORN... AND WE'RE ALREADY BEHIND THE CURVE.

THE GOBLIN? HE ALWAYS COMES BACK TO HAUNT ME. GWEN... HE TOOK HER AWAY FROM ME... AND IT SEEMS LIKE HE'S TRIED TO TAKE EVERYTHING ELSE FROM ME EVER SINCE.

WAIT! MARY JANE! COULD HE HAVE --? NO!



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I'VE GOT TO SEE HIM! I'VE GOT TO KNOW!

A SHORT TIME LATER, IN THE SHADOW OF THE 59TH STREET BRIDGE...

LIZ!
LIZ OSBORN!

DO YOU SEE WHAT YOU'RE CAUSING? ALL THESE POLICE... ALL THIS UNNECESSARY DESTRUCTION! DO YOU REALLY WANT AN INNOCENT LIFE ON YOUR HANDS?

I KNOW I DON'T! STOP RUNNING... AND COME TO ME! IT WILL BE QUICK AND PAINLESS!

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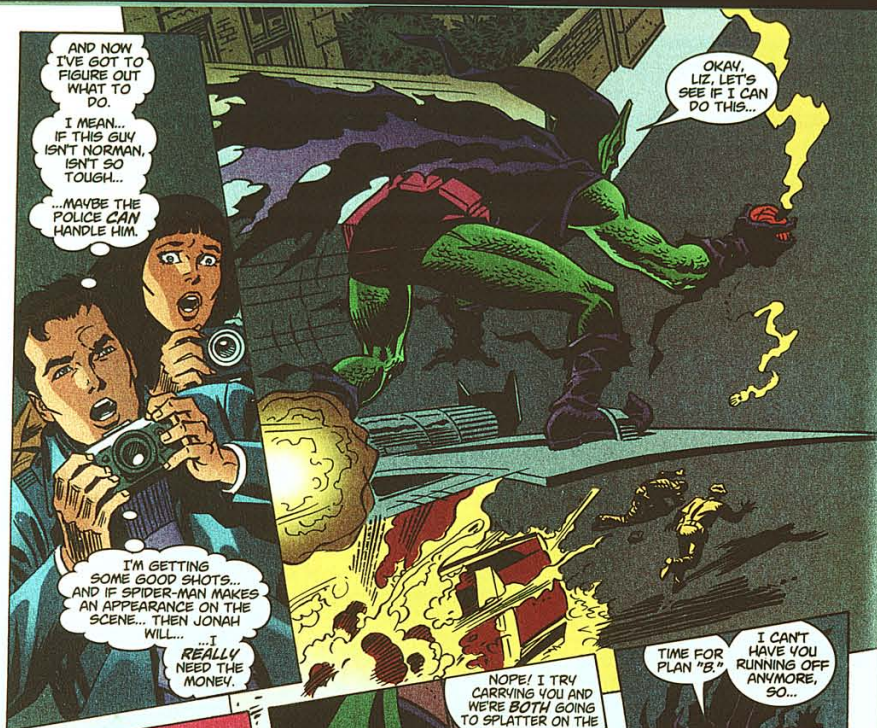


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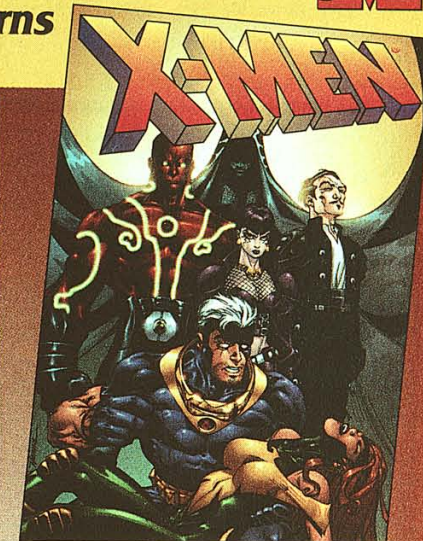
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- ☐ CAM Captain America
- ☐ DDV Daredevil
- ☐ FAN Fantastic Four
- ☐ INC Hulk
- ☐ IRM Iron Man
- ☐ THO Thor
- ☐ BLT Thunderbolts

X-MEN

- ☐ BSH Bishop
- ☐ CAB Cable
- ☐ DDP Deadpool
- ☐ GAM Gambit
- ☐ GEN Generation X
- ☐ MTX Mutant X
- ☐ XME Uncanny X-Men
- ☐ WOL Wolverine
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FINE, MISTER
SPIDER-MAN, I
GIVE UP!

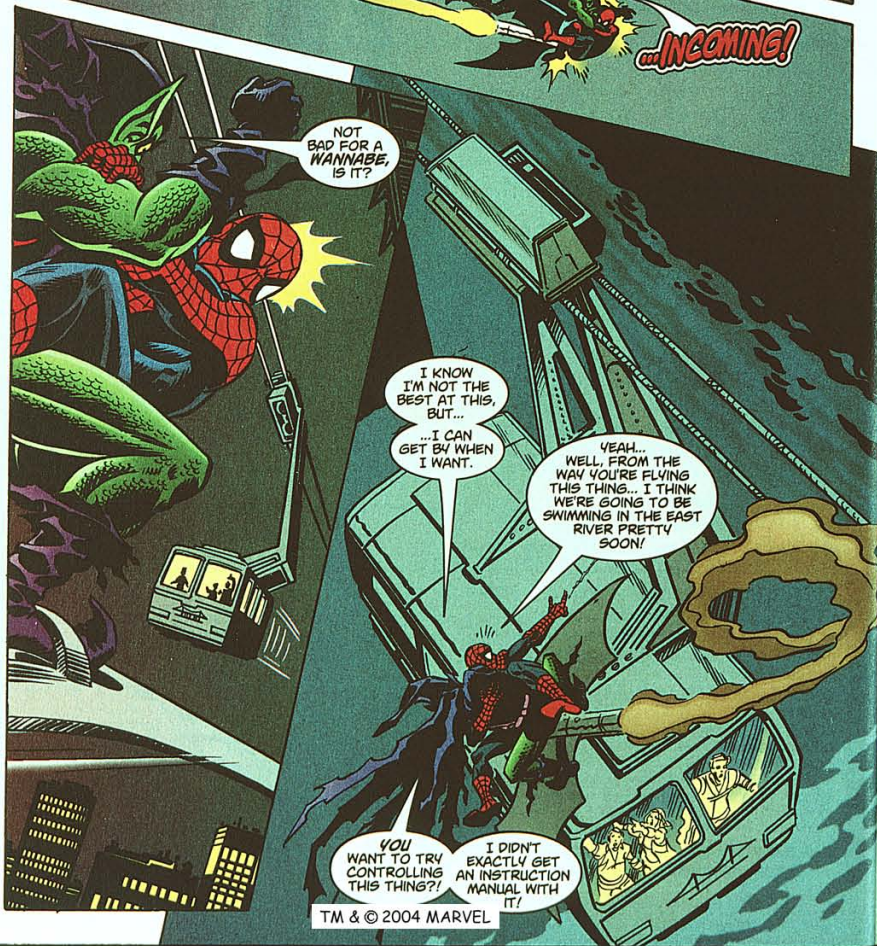
I REPENT.

DON'T KNOW
WHAT I WAS
THINKING!

I'LL JUST
LEAVE, GO ABOUT
MY BUSINESS AND
NEVER BOTHER
YOU AGAIN.

OH,
BY THE
WAY...

...INCOMING!



NOT
BAD FOR A
WANNABE,
IS IT?

I KNOW
I'M NOT THE
BEST AT THIS,
BUT...

...I CAN
GET BY WHEN
I WANT.

YEAH...
WELL, FROM THE
WAY YOU'RE FLYING
THIS THING... I THINK
WE'RE GOING TO BE
SWIMMING IN THE EAST
RIVER PRETTY
SOON!

YOU
WANT TO TRY
CONTROLLING
THIS THING?!

I DIDN'T
EXACTLY GET
AN INSTRUCTION
MANUAL WITH
IT!

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WHO
ARE
YOU?
WHY
ARE YOU
DOING
THIS --?

DON'T
START WITH
ME!
I'VE
BEEN
HAVING
A BAD
YEAR!

...POINTY END
TOWARD THE
TARGET...
...FLICK
THE WRIST
AND...

...RAZOR BAT
AWAY!

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YOU THINK
THIS IS MY
IDEA OF
FUN?

SURE, IT'S GOT
ITS MOMENTS,
BUT --

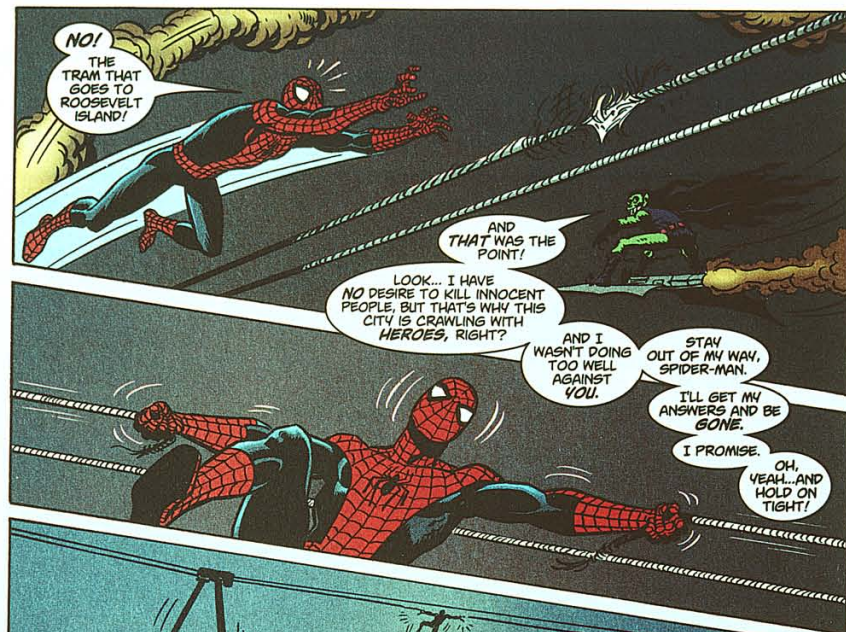
-- WHAT
AM I
DOING?

DO ALL
SUPER-HERO/
SUPER-VILLAIN
BATTLES END UP
IN POINTLESS
EXPOSITION?

WELL, I'VE
GOT MORE
IMPORTANT
THINGS TO
ATTEND TO.

LET'S
SEE IF I CAN
REMEMBER
HOW THIS
GOES.

THUMB
GOES
HERE...



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TO BE CONTINUED...

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THE SPIDER'S WEB

Last month we ran comments that were representative of the more immediate reaction to Mary Jane Parker-Watson's apparent demise in **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #13**. This issue, we'll focus on some of the longer, more contemplative letters. Enjoy!

Dear Spider's Web,

What can I say aside from "Wow"? Talk about a payoff. Kudos to a story well told; you had me going from the start that this was all about an imminent break between Peter and MJ. Was I ever wrong! Look at it from a reader's standpoint rather than a creator's, and you'll understand the effect this issue had on most of us. We pretty much knew Peter would miss the plane (the irony being he was finally getting some positive recognition while running toward his greatest failing), no matter how quickly he raced the clock. Too little, too late. Sucks to be Peter Parker. Again. She's gone, baby, gone. And then our stomach gives a little hitch. The old man with the lollipop brings every reader's own personal spider-sense into high gear, though a small part of us does rejoice—it can't be over if MJ is still in danger!

Oh, how little we truly know. Seeing the plane go down in a ball of flames was like a punch in the gut. So much for rejoicing.

And that's part of the payoff. This isn't over. This climax was merely the beginning, and it sets up far too many possibilities to even begin speculation. Is she dead? If not, where is she? And who has her? If she is dead, who was ultimately responsible? The old cool with the all-day sucker? Probably not, and the answers will have us waiting on pins and needles.

This is vintage John Byrne. Howard Mackie has the scripting chore, and he's done an admirable job. But make no mistake about it, the pacing, the little reassurances given that the hero's plight may not be so hopeless (no, youngster, it's worse), this is all what Byrne does best. Leave the reader wounded—but wanting more.

I haven't been this shocked at a story's turn since Alpha Flight's Guardian was killed (Hmmm). I know this story has its detractors (a certain comics magazine that shall remain nameless seems to have it in for the distinguished Mr. Byrne). But consider the pacing of many comics today. To ensure a return on their investment—a returning audience—they feel the need for a Wham-Bang-Payoff every issue. It's almost expected now, and very little time is spent developing stories, sub-plots, and most importantly, characters.

The "tragic" endings are stunted by a general apathy toward the characters. Where is the payoff in that? They could all take some lessons from John and Howard.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN is Marvel's flagship title. I'm glad to see it is again the most exciting comic on the shelf. Thank you for a gripping good time—and the promise of more to come!

Ken Cross

We're sorry, Ken, but it seems that you're having far too much of a good time with a storyline that's been critically drubbed ahead of time by "a

certain comics magazine that shall remain nameless." We're afraid we're going to have to revoke your license to read comics in this oh-so-modern age of ours. Haven't you heard, fun and excitement aren't what funny books are about anymore!

Dear Spider's Web,

I don't think Mary Jane Parker is really dead, but I like the way that Howard Mackie and John Byrne wrote her out of the series. Just don't bring her back too soon. Mary Jane has been rather stable for years. She was one of the best supporting characters ever created, but she was so much more interesting when she was fun-loving, wild, and a free agent. If and when she is brought back, I think that the Parkers' marriage should be over.

Peter Parker was/is the quintessential hard-luck hero. The domestic life just doesn't fit his character. He is supposed to be a guy that deserves to have a wonderful marriage, a devoted wife, financial stability—but finds these things elusive. Peter Parker is most interesting when his personal life has been thrown into turmoil; perpetual heartache is part of the mythos. Now he is suddenly a widower. This is a great opportunity to deal with the grief and pain that drives him. But unlike the deaths of Gwen Stacy, Captain Stacy, or Uncle Ben, Peter cannot blame himself for Mary Jane's death...or can he?

Peter DePietro
Boston, MA

Thanks for writing, Peter. You hit on the central argument at the heart of recent speculation regarding the future of the Parkers' marriage. Namely, does Peter's having a happy hearth and home contradict his core appeal as a hero with feet of clay? On the other hand, numerous fans argue rightly that growth and change are the hallmarks of a successful character, and to keep too closely to these aspects lead to a clichéd character.

We've received many differing viewpoints on this topic. Any new interpretations out there?

Dear Websters,

I predict a flood of letters about the death of MJ. Like this one for instance. A lot of people will put her in the category of Reed Richards/Aunt May/Doctor Octopus, expecting it to be overturned at some point in the future, especially since the mystery of the Lollipop Man was not solved, and he supposedly died in the crash as well (like he died in the car explosion).

I'm personally hoping for a long-term death (only in the comics biz could anyone even use that phrase). My reasons are clear, especially in light of the events of **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #14**, when Mattie Franklin aka Spider-Woman liplocks Peter. He's now a free agent, and that ups the zest of the book 100%. Although, having Mattie jump the gun so overwhelmingly was a bit disconcerting. Those bricks must've hit her harder than she knew for her to be so callous. Peter hasn't even begun to mourn.

Charlotte is very interesting—a villain created against her will, which makes her intriguingly complex. I'm curious to see if she can repeat her

absorbing powers with others.

Jonah's cavalier attitude at the beginning of the issue bothered me more than Mattie's did later. In **PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN #13**, he was one of the first people to come to comfort May and Peter, and he has frequently shown a gruff but fatherly affection for Peter, though never in Peter's presence (he secretly put up Peter's bail during the clone saga, he keeps multiple copies of Peter's book "Webs" in his office, etc.). Yet, at the beginning of **ASM #14**, he's practically yawning about MJ's death and tells Mattie he had his secret news in Peter and May a "basket of fruit or something." The inconsistency is frustrating. It will be interesting to see who lines up to comfort Peter and how fast they'll get there. Jill Stacy and Felicia Hardy should be right behind Mattie.

Sally Cutler
Imlay City, MI

Leave it to you, Sally, to coin the phrase "long-term death." So you're looking for Peter to eventually recover from his grief and hit the dating scene again, eh? You wouldn't be alone there, although as you say, it certainly would be premature at any point in the near future.

Regarding your comments about Mattie's perceived callousness, let's remember that she's a fifteen-year-old girl. The restraint many adults would have shown was absent—deliberately and realistically so. And concerning your statement about Jonah, we don't see the contradiction. In the scene you refer to in **PSM #13**, Jonah was hardly tripping over himself with grief or sentiment. He showed up because it was the right thing to do. His comment to Mattie in **ASM** merely showed him in a distracted frame of mind. Sorry it appeared to be contradictory, Sally.

NEXT ISSUE:

WHEN SPIDEY MISPLACES HIS COSTUME, HE HAS TO DON A FAMILIAR BLACK-AND-WHITE ONE! NOT ONLY THAT, BUT HE FINDS HIMSELF FACING OFF AGAINST A VILLAIN WITH A DISTURBINGLY SIMILAR COLOR SCHEME! NOT ONLY THAT, BUT THIS ISSUE MARKS THE RETURN OF ERIK LARSEN TO THE SPIDER-MAN MYTHOS! NOT ONLY THAT, BUT IT'S WRITTEN BY HOWARD MACKIE AND GUEST-INKED BY JOHN BEATTY! NOT ONLY THAT, BUT IT'S EDITED BY RAUL F. WELL, NOT REALLY EDITED, MORE LIKE "ALLOWED TO HAPPEN WITHOUT ANY INPUT OR INTERFERENCE."

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DAY FOR STRONG BONES. HEY, WHEN
YOU'RE TRADING PUNCHES WITH
DOC OCK, **CALCIUM** IS YOUR
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